

Remarks:

After entry of this amendment, claims 1-20 are pending in the subject application.

Claims 1 and 11 have been amended to overcome the Examiner's rejections, and claim 20 has been added to further define the scope of the invention. Reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sutcliffe, United States Patent No. 6,249,282 in view of Olivier, United States Patent No. 6,480,885. With regard to claim 1, the Examiner asserts that Sutcliffe discloses:

providing access to a database of profile information (Figure 1, Element 22 and corresponding text)
registering profile information to the database (Figure 3A, Element 200 and 202 and corresponding text)

The Examiner noted that although Sutcliffe discloses matching one user with another and that the result of the match can be ordered (as in sorted) (Column 2, Line 65 through Column 3, Line 3) which indicates that the result of the match is really a list or a group of users or subscribers with similar characteristics, yet Sutcliffe does not explicitly indicate the step of grouping said subscriber with at least two said fellow subscribers to form at least one group, nor does the reference explicitly indicate the display step, and to better address all the limitations of the claim, the Examiner is combing a second reference for Olivier.

With regard to Olivier, the Examiner asserts that Olivier teaches grouping said subscribers with said at least two of said fellow subscribers to form at least one group based on similarities between said subscriber's profile information (Column 15, Line 52 through Column 16, Line 10; see also Column 14, Lines 62-65; see also Column 20, Lines 30-35); and the limitation of displaying said group of said subscribers (Column 24, Lines 36-38). Given the intended broad application of the Sutcliffe system, the Examiner asserts that it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of Applicant's invention to modify the teachings of Sutcliffe with the teachings of Olivier to form a group of three or to match at least two users to one another and display the group on a display, as one would like to present the most matches with the best results to the user, and, at the same time, provide the user with a better flexibility in the system to have more than one or two users or subscribers in the group, for instance, in a discussion group, increasing the flexibility would lead to a more successful discussion by having more than one or two opinions to participate.

Applicant respectfully notes that Olivier discloses a method whereby members are matched based on the founding group's agreed-upon criteria. The criteria need not be all-inclusive, but rather only requires one element by which to match the new members with the founding group. Therefore, the criteria for matching the new members to the founding group is a one-way or two-way method whereby similarity is only between the founding group and the new member. Applicant's subject application is different from the Olivier method in that Applicant's method provides a multi-way criterion whereby not only must the founding group match criteria with the new members, but rather, the new members must match criteria with other new

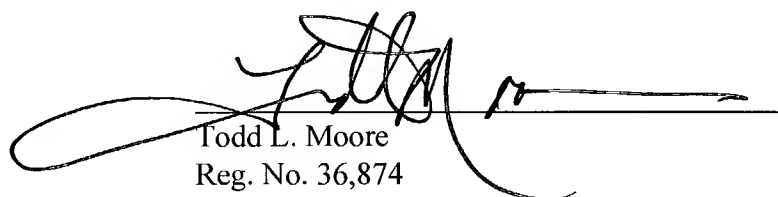
members as well. This assures that the group will have greater commonality with all of the members of the group as compared to the founding group having commonality with individual new members. Therefore, Applicant has amended the claims to specify that all of the subscribers' profiles in the group must be similar to each other. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejections to claims 1 and 11.

With respect to claims 2-10 and 12-19, Applicant respectfully notes that in light of the newly amended independent claims, the dependent claims in combination with the amended claims provide a method which is not suggested, taught, nor disclosed by Sutcliffe in light of Olivier. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejections to claims 2-10 and 12-19 in light of the obviousness rejections.

For the foregoing reasons and in light of the amended claims, Applicant respectfully requests that the objections be withdrawn, and the claims be allowed to proceed to issue.

The Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned counsel at (734) 662-0270 or by electronic mail at tlmyb@aol.com if the Examiner should have any questions concerning this paper.

Respectfully Submitted,



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